



THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ÉGLISES

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

By-Laws

As revised and adopted by the Governing Board

19 May 2021

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

BY-LAWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I	Incorporation and Business.....	4
SECTION II	Forum.....	4
SECTION III	Membership.....	5
A.	Criteria of Membership.....	5
B.	Churches Formed through Union.....	6
C.	Associate Membership.....	6
D.	Termination of Membership.....	7
E.	Suspension of a Member Church or a Representative from a Member Church.....	7
SECTION IV	Participation by Non-Member Organizations.....	8
A.	Observers and Affiliates.....	8
B.	Participation in Governing Board Meetings.....	9
C.	Participation in Commissions, Reference Groups, Committees and delegations.....	9
D.	Periodic Review.....	9
E.	Responsibility of Observers and Affiliates.....	9
SECTION V	Governing Board and Executive Committee.....	10
A.	Purpose.....	10
B.	Membership.....	10
C.	Meetings.....	11
D.	Tasks of the Governing Board.....	11
E.	Tasks of the Executive Committee.....	12
F.	Rules of Order.....	13
SECTION VI	Standing Committees of the Governing Board.....	13
A.	Nominating Committee.....	13

B.	Personnel Committee	15
C.	Finance Committee.....	16
D.	Constitution Committee.....	17
E.	Committee on Youth Involvement.....	17
SECTION VII	The Assembly.....	18
A.	Purpose	18
B.	Meetings	18
SECTION VIII	Officers.....	19
A.	President.....	19
B.	Past President.....	19
C.	Vice-Presidents.....	19
D.	Treasurer.....	20
E.	General Secretary	20
SECTION IX	Commissions of the Council.....	21
A.	Commission on Faith and Witness.....	21
1.	Purpose.....	21
2.	Tasks	21
3.	Membership.....	22
4.	Meetings	23
B.	Commission on Justice and Peace	23
1.	Purpose.....	23
2.	Tasks	24
3.	Membership.....	25
4.	Meetings	25
SECTION X	Reference Groups, Committees and Working Groups.....	26
A.	Reference Groups and other bodies of the Governing Board	26
B.	Committees of the Governing Board	26

C.	Working Groups.....	26
D.	Ad Hoc Committees	27
E.	Forum.....	27
F.	Accountability and Responsibility.....	27
SECTION XI	Project Ploughshares	28
A.	Project Ploughshares Management Committee.....	28
B.	Accountability and Responsibility.....	28
C.	Chair of the Project Ploughshares Management Committee.....	28
D.	Governance Protocol	28
SECTION XII	Guidelines for Council Statements.....	28
A.	Purpose and Types of Statements	28
B.	Responsible Bodies	29
C.	Initiation and Process.....	30
D.	Forum Consensus	32
SECTION XIII	Amendments	32

BY-LAWS

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

("the Council")

SECTION I INCORPORATION¹ AND BUSINESS

1. The head office of the Council shall be in the City of Toronto, in the Province of Ontario or at such other place as may be designated by the Council.
2. French and English shall be the official languages of the Council.
3. The seal of the Council shall be a cross with two maple leaves at its base; the whole encircled by the words "The Canadian Council of Churches" in both English and French.

SECTION II FORUM

To function as forum, the standard of practice for each body of the Council shall be that:

1. Each member church has equal voice in discussing issues.
2. The Council acts as coordinator of churches wishing to work together, enabling member churches to act together, or where there is unanimity to delegate the Council to act on their behalf.
3. The concerns of the Council shall normally originate with member churches through their appointed representatives. However, since the Council is part of the Body of Christ and must respond to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, agenda items may also arise from other sources. They are then referred to the appropriate Commission or the Governing Board, or to the Executive or other Committees when mandated by the Governing Board. In these bodies the appointed representatives of the member churches accept responsibility for these concerns by deciding whether and what action should be taken on them. In this

¹ *An Act to incorporate The Canadian Council of Churches*. Bill Q⁵, The Senate of Canada, 3rd Session, 22nd Parliament, 4-5 Elizabeth II, 1956. (Assented to 7th June, 1956).

way the member churches ultimately determine the agenda of the Council and its various parts.

4. It is the intent that the Council shall act with the agreement of all member churches.²
5. When agreement is not possible, member churches shall have the privilege of opting into smaller multi-church fora for common action. Such actions shall not be in the name of the Canadian Council of Churches, though the Council office and staff could be asked to facilitate them.
6. Signatories for statements from the Council will vary according to need. When the Council acts as Council, the signatories will be the ecclesiastical authorities or officers of member churches. When the Council acts in a reporting capacity, the General Secretary may be the one to sign. When the member churches act in concert, their ecclesiastical authorities will be the signatories. However, when an issue has unmistakable doctrinal implications or import, actions in the name of the Council can only be agreed to at the level of the full Governing Board.
7. When a Commission, Reference Group, Working Group or Ad Hoc Committee acts apart from the Governing Board, it shall be clearly identified as such.

SECTION III MEMBERSHIP

A. CRITERIA OF MEMBERSHIP

A Christian church body seeking election as a member of the Council, in addition to indicating its acceptance of the Basis³ on which the Council is founded, must satisfy the following criteria:

² See "Protocol for Public Statements" as adopted or revised by the Governing Board.

³ Constitution of The Canadian Council of Churches, Article II.

1. It shall have a basis of association on which it exists as a church body, such as a constitution, covenant, statement of faith, or other form of confession.
2. It shall give evidence of financial autonomy, stability and continuity as a church body in Canada.
3. It shall have a definite form of church government including a responsible central body or association.
4. It shall demonstrate a spirit of co-operation with, and respect for other Christian communions.
5. It shall consist normally of at least ten congregations and of 2,000 members in different provinces and territories of Canada, unless special circumstances warrant an exception.
6. It shall undertake to make annual contributions to the Council budget as requested by the Governing Board.
7. A church body which does not have credal statements within its tradition may apply for and be elected to membership provided it demonstrates by its church life and conduct that it upholds the spirit of the Basis.

B. CHURCHES FORMED THROUGH UNION

A church body resulting from the union of two or more church bodies, any of which have been members of the Council, shall be recognized by the Governing Board as a member of the Council upon receipt of a statement of the intention of the new church body to fulfil the obligations of membership in the Council.⁴

C. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP⁵

⁴ See the Constitution (Article V, Section I).

⁵ See the Constitution (Article VI, Section I).

1. Unless otherwise provided for, these By-Laws shall apply equally to associate member churches.
2. A review of the associate membership shall take place, usually every three years. Both the Council and the Associate Member shall review the status of the Associate Member and report to each other.
3. A financial agreement shall be drawn up between the Associate Member and the Council, and it shall be binding during the period designated.

D. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in The Canadian Council of Churches may be terminated when:

1. the member church is dissolved;
2. a member fails to maintain qualifications for membership as described in Section IIIA. of these by-laws after failure to satisfy the criteria has been called to the attention of the member and corrective action has not been taken within 90 days of being asked to do so to the satisfaction of Council as determined by a majority vote of Council;
3. the member church withdraws its membership by delivering a written letter to the President of the Governing Board effective on the date specified, ideally with at least ninety (90) days notice.

E. SUSPENSION OF A MEMBER CHURCH OR A REPRESENTATIVE FROM A MEMBER CHURCH

The Governing Board or its Executive Committee shall have authority to suspend or expel any member church or any representative of a member church from The Canadian Council of Churches for any one or more of the following grounds:

1. serious violation of a provision of the articles, by-laws, or written policies of The Canadian Council of Churches;
2. carrying out any conduct which may be detrimental to the Canadian Council of Churches as determined by the Governing Board in its sole and absolute discretion.
3. for any other reason that the board in its sole and absolute discretion considers to be reasonable, having regard to the purpose of The Canadian Council of Churches.

In the event that the Governing Board or its Executive Committee determines that a member church or representative of a member church should be expelled or suspended, the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the board, shall provide twenty (20) days notice of suspension or expulsion to the member church or member church representative, and shall provide reasons for the proposed suspension or expulsion. The member church or representative of a member church may make written submissions to the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the Governing Board or its Executive Committee, in response to the notice received within such twenty (20) day period. In the event that no written submissions are received by the President, the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the Governing Board or its Executive Committee, may proceed to notify the member church or representative of a member church that they are suspended or expelled. If written submissions are received in accordance with this section, the Governing Board or its Executive Committee will consider such submissions in arriving at a final decision and shall notify the member church or representative of a member church concerning such final decision within a further twenty (20) days from the date of receipt of the submissions. The Governing Board or its Executive Committee's decision shall be final and binding on the member church or the representative of a member church, without any further right of appeal.

SECTION IV PARTICIPATION BY NON-MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

A. OBSERVERS AND AFFILIATES

The following may be invited by the Governing Board to designate a representative or representatives to participate in the work of the Council and may, as hereinafter provided, be accorded the privilege of representation on such Governing Board, Commission, Reference Group or Committee with voice but no vote:

1. churches not members of the Council which are recognized as being in agreement with the Basis of the Constitution under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution, referred to as Observers. When a church that is not a member of the Council asks to become an Observer, this request will be received by the General Secretary who will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, which will decide whether or not to accept the request to become an Observer.
2. bodies recognized under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution as affiliated boards or agencies, related movements, or organizations in collegial relationship, referred to as Affiliates. When a board or agency, related movement, or organization in collegial relationship asks to become an Affiliate, this request will be received by the Executive

Committee and brought to the Governing Board for discussion, which should include a representative of the prospective Affiliate. At the following meeting of the Governing Board, at which the organization will not be present, the Governing Board will then decide whether or not to accept the request to become an Affiliate.

B. PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS

Observers may participate in discussions at the invitation of the President or presiding Vice-President. Affiliates may participate in discussions on those matters that relate to the mission of the Affiliate.

During breakout discussion groups, Observers and Affiliates may participate subject to the discretion of the President or presiding Vice-President. Observers and Affiliates shall not intervene in discussions that precede a vote or a major decision of the Governing Board, nor may they vote.

C. PARTICIPATION IN COMMISSIONS, REFERENCE GROUPS, COMMITTEES AND DELEGATIONS

Observers and Affiliates are welcome to participate in the work of Commissions, Reference Groups or Committees when invited by agreement of that Commission, Reference Group or Committee for a term specified in advance, normally at the start of a triennium. This involvement may be renewed by the Commission, Reference Group or Committee as desired.

Normally, Observers and Affiliates will not participate in delegations unless requested by the Governing Board, Commission, Reference Group or Committee.

D. PERIODIC REVIEW

A periodic review of Observers and Affiliates shall take place, usually every three years. Both the Council and the Observer or Affiliate shall review their status and report to each other. The Executive Committee may remove an Observer and the Governing Board may remove an Affiliate, both without cause.

E. RESPONSIBILITY OF OBSERVERS AND AFFILIATES

In accepting the invitation and privileges of participating in selected phases of Council work, it is understood that Observers and Affiliates so recognized accept responsibility for assisting in the furthering of such work, for sharing in its financial support, and for interpreting it to their constituencies. Participating in Council work is on an unpaid, voluntary basis.

SECTION V GOVERNING BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. PURPOSE

1. The Governing Board shall review ecumenical life in Canada and reflect on its significance. It shall identify needs and direct the affairs of the Council to express the unity which member churches desire. It shall discern, coordinate and communicate the common mission of the churches, long-range planning and policy formation. It has oversight over all the bodies and activities of the Council, as well as the relationship between or among Commissions, Reference Groups, Working Groups, Committees and Project Ploughshares as outlined in these By-Laws.
2. The basic governing body of the Council shall be the Governing Board which is understood to be the "Council in general meeting" (see the Act, Section 5) and its members exercise fiduciary duty and the duty of care for the Council.
3. The Executive Committee exercises fiduciary responsibility and duty of care by managing the affairs of the Council, taking responsibility for emergency matters and conducting such business as the Governing Board may assign. The Executive Committee is accountable to the Governing Board.

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of the Governing Board and Executive Committee is defined in Article IX of the Constitution.

Youth members of the Governing Board shall be a member of one of the member churches or associate member churches of the Council. Through their membership in a member church or associate member church, each youth member is typically attuned to the sensibilities of different Christian traditions in the family of member churches. Each youth member of the Governing Board serves the Council as a whole and therefore does not represent their member church or tradition.

2. The President or the General Secretary may invite staff of the Council to meetings of the Governing Board and of the Executive Committee, with voice but no vote.
3. The President or the General Secretary may invite to meetings of the Governing Board guests, observers or consultants. These shall have voice, but no vote.

4. No remuneration shall be paid to members of the Governing Board, except for reimbursement of reasonable expenses.
5. An insurance policy shall be maintained for directors and officers liability with respect to their duties as officers or directors.

C. MEETINGS

1. The frequency of the meetings shall take place as prescribed by the Constitution.
2. Failure of a member to receive notification of a meeting will not invalidate any proceedings taken thereat, subject to Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution.
3. At least one Governing Board meeting of each triennial period shall be held in a different geographical area. That meeting would add to the regular format at least one day dedicated to meeting the local ecumenical community. Planners would also integrate an engagement with local ecumenism into the agenda of the meeting.
4. The Executive Committee may determine that its meetings or the meeting of the Governing Board be held entirely by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

D. TASKS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board shall:

1. plan and determine policy for the Council in the light of the ecumenical situation;
2. admit church bodies to membership, associate membership, and affiliates;
3. oversee policies regarding the participation of non-member organizations;
4. make statements on public issues when appropriate;
5. receive recommendations and confirm appointments of the General Secretary and the Executive Director of Project Ploughshares;

6. receive the reports and policies of the Executive Committee, Standing Committees, Commissions, Project Ploughshares, Reference Groups, and such special Committees as may be appointed by the Board, review and reflect on them and make decisions as necessary;
7. receive and act on reports from the Nominating Committee in relationship to Triennial elections and membership on the Executive Committee, the commissions and other bodies of the Council;
8. agree on a process and amounts to be used in making annual budget requests to each category of membership.

E. TASKS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall:

1. report to the Governing Board through the President;
2. act on decisions of the Governing Board;
3. oversee the work of the Treasurer and ensure the availability of sufficient funds for the work of the Council;
4. receive recommendations of the Personnel Committee regarding the employment and release of executive staff personnel and make recommendations to the Governing Board;
5. direct and support the Council staff in the implementation of policy as established by the Governing Board and, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, receive and consider staff initiatives and work priorities; and
6. in all suitable ways support the Governing Board in carrying out its fiduciary duties and responsibilities.

F. RULES OF ORDER

Bourinot's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary guide, except for such rules as may be set forth in the Constitution or By-Laws of the Council.

SECTION VI STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The following standing Committees shall be appointed by the Governing Board after consultation with the churches. Each Committee shall elect its own chairperson. The Governing Board can remove the Chair and any member of a Committee. Each Committee shall represent the diversity of the member churches.

A. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. There shall be a Nominating Committee of at least five members representing the breadth of the membership of the Council.
2. The Nominating Committee shall make the following nominations to the Governing Board after consultation with member churches and other bodies:
 - a. the President;
 - b. the Vice-Presidents;
 - c. the Treasurer; and
 - d. the Youth members of the Governing Board.
3. Upon receipt of notice from the General Secretary that a vacancy exists in any of the foregoing positions, the Committee shall nominate a candidate for the unexpired term, submitting such nomination to the Governing Board or, if urgent, to the Executive Committee.
4. The Nomination Committee shall receive appointments from the member churches of:
 - a. members of Commissions, Reference Groups, Committees and Working Groups of the Council,

- b. members of standing committees: Nominating, Personnel, Finance, Constitution, and Youth, and such other committees as may be required from time to time, and
- c. such other appointments as may be required.

5. Procedures for the Nomination and Election of Officers:

a. Nomination Procedures:

- 1) Approximately twelve months prior to the expiry of each three-year term of office, member churches shall be asked to make nominations for the position of President and Vice-Presidents. They shall have two months to reply.
- 2) The Committee shall prepare for the Governing Board's Spring meeting the slate of those who have been nominated and are willing to let their names stand and have the agreement of their member churches.
- 3) Churches or Commissions may nominate persons from any member church of the Council, with the prior agreement of the nominee and the nominee's member church.
- 4) When a request for nominations is sent to member churches, each nomination shall be accompanied by a brief biographical sketch (approximately 100 words) of the person concerned. The sketch shall include the nominee's denomination but shall not mention the group or groups making the nomination.
- 5) The Nominating Committee shall take such steps as are necessary to encourage member churches to provide a balanced slate of nominees.
- 6) When a vacancy exists in the office of Treasurer, the procedures for nomination and election as stated in this bylaw will be followed.

b. Election Procedures:

- 1) The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for nominating to the Governing Board one person for President and for each Vice-President.
- 2) When electing these officers, the Governing Board shall deal with each position separately, starting with the President.

- 3) After the Committee has placed a name in nomination, opportunity shall be given for other nominations. Before a nomination can be received, it must first have been given in writing to the Committee at least twenty-four hours previously, supported by a member church, and have the consent of the nominee and the nominee's member church. A brief biographical sketch must also be given to the Committee.
- 4) After nominations are completed, the vote shall be taken and the person receiving the majority of votes shall be declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority, the person receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped and the balloting continued.

B. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. There shall be a Personnel Committee.
2. The Personnel Committee shall work with the General Secretary in:
 - a. developing, interpreting, and applying personnel policies which enable the Council to employ and retain a staff competent to implement its goals and objectives;
 - b. recommending to the Governing Board the number and nature of staff positions;
 - c. recommending to the Executive Committee the employment and release of executive staff personnel;
 - d. consulting as needed with the Executive Committee on the workload of the Council's staff;
 - e. assisting the Governing Board in the search and selection process for executive staff; and
 - f. seeing that performance reviews of all staff are carried out according to the Personnel Policies Handbook.
3. All other matters pertaining to the Personnel Committee are described in its Terms of Reference, which shall be reviewed and updated in keeping with these By-Laws.

C. FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. There shall be a Finance Committee of at least six members on which the financial officers of the Council's member churches, or their delegates, are invited to sit.
2. The Finance Committee shall:
 - a. review the annual budgets of the Council and make recommendations thereon to the Governing Board;
 - b. oversee the financial operations of the Council and its administration;
 - c. in co-operation with the Personnel Committee recommend salary ranges for all staff categories and for specific positions;
 - d. review the current financial status of the Council for regular report to the Governing Board;
 - e. review the annual report of the Treasurer, for presentation to the auditor;
 - f. review, and advise the Treasurer on the investments of the Council; and
 - g. assure that all monies, securities, and other valuable effects shall be deposited in the name and to the credit of the Canadian Council of Churches in such chartered bank or trust company, or in the case of securities, in such registered dealer in securities as may be designated by the Governing Board.
3. The Finance Committee shall also oversee the annual audit:
 - a. review the draft financial statements prepared for audit;
 - b. recommend the final audited statements to the Governing Board for approval;
 - c. review, and advise the Governing Board on, the auditor's recommendation(s); and
 - d. recommend to the Governing Board the appointment of auditors and their fee.

D. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

1. There shall be a Constitution Committee.
2. The Constitution Committee shall:
 - a. interpret the Constitution and By-Laws of the Council, as may be requested or required;
 - b. review every three years the Constitution and By-Laws of the Council in accordance with the Act, recommending to the Governing Board such changes as may seem desirable or necessary in accord with Articles XV and XVI of the Constitution;
 - c. review and make recommendations on applications for membership or recognition of non-member organizations;
 - d. obtain expert or legal advice regarding compliance with federal and provincial laws as necessary.

E. COMMITTEE ON YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

1. There will be a Committee on Youth Involvement of at least six members.
2. The Committee on Youth Involvement shall:
 - a. facilitate members inviting young adults into planning, discernment and participation at every level of the Council;
 - b. encourage member churches to identify, mentor and send young adults to participate in the Council, including its Governing Board, Commissions, Project Ploughshares, Reference Groups, and Working Groups;
 - c. listen and learn from youth participation in the various levels of the Council, report on findings and make recommendations at least annually to the Governing Board;
 - d. facilitate the involvement of young adults in all the activities of the Council in a meaningful way that is consistent with forum in study, action, service and leadership development; and
 - e. participate in the renewal of the ecumenical movement in Canada.

3. The Committee on Youth Involvement may be comprised of the following members:
 - a. up to three representatives from each member church of the Council, and at least half of the Committee's members shall be youth from member churches who will make every effort to see that there is diversity present on the committee;
 - b. national youth staff, in those denominations which have them, as consultant members without vote, and
 - c. invited participants (without vote) who possess specific skills or experience, or who belong to organizations which share the concerns of the Council.

SECTION VII THE ASSEMBLY

A. PURPOSE

The Assembly shall provide a national forum offering a broader focus, more open participation and prayerful, large-scale, face-to-face or virtual celebration of ecumenical community in Christ.

B. MEETINGS

Meetings of the Assembly shall be at the call of the Governing Board, and shall be planned in the spirit of forum, at reasonable interludes, allowing for annual budget allocations to accrue and for adequate preparation time. Participation would not necessarily be limited to delegates of member churches. Shared prayer, ecumenical education, focus on important current questions, provision for French as well as English participation, and a national frame of reference would all be important components of such Assembly meetings.

SECTION VIII OFFICERS

A. PRESIDENT

The President provides general leadership to the Council and is the presiding officer at meetings of the Assembly, the Governing Board and the Executive Committee⁶.

The President is an Officer of the Council along with the immediate past President, the Vice-Presidents, the General Secretary and the Treasurer.

The President shall be a member of one of the member churches. The President serves the Council as a whole and therefore does not represent their member church or their specific Christian tradition.

The President or one of the Vice-Presidents, if the President is absent or unable to act, shall preside over the Assembly and over the meetings of the Governing Board and its Executive Committee.

The President and the General Secretary are the principal interpreters and spokespersons of the Council.

B. PAST PRESIDENT

The Past President is an officer of the Council along with the President, the Vice-Presidents, the General Secretary and the Treasurer.

The Past President serves on the Executive Committee and other Committees of the Council as may be appropriate.

C. VICE-PRESIDENTS

The Vice-Presidents provide leadership to the Council and, at the request of the President or when the President is absent or unable to act, the Vice-Presidents preside over the Assembly and over the meetings of the Governing Board and its Executive Committee.

The Vice-Presidents are officers of the Council along with the President, the immediate past President, the General Secretary and the Treasurer.

⁶ See the Constitution, Article X, Sections 1 to 5.

There shall be a Vice-President assigned to each Commission and Project Ploughshares.

Vice-Presidents shall be a member of one of the member churches or associate member churches. Through their membership in a member church or associate member church, each Vice-President is typically attuned to the sensibilities of different Christian traditions in the family of member churches. The Vice-Presidents serve the Council as a whole and therefore do not represent their member church or tradition.

D. TREASURER

The Treasurer is an officer of the Council along with the President, the immediate past President, the Vice-Presidents, and the General Secretary.

The Treasurer shall be a member of one of the member churches or associate member churches.

The Treasurer shall be the chief fiscal officer of the Council, elected by the Governing Board for a term or terms of years as the Board may determine. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Executive Committee and report to the Governing Board.

E. GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary shall:

1. direct the administration of the work of Council and the conduct of its programs and staff;
2. recommend to the Governing Board or appropriate bodies policies and procedures for the Council;
3. report to the Governing Board on the over-all progress and problems of the Council and provide to the Governing Board Spring Meeting an Annual report;
4. with the advice of such Working Groups as the Governing Board may from time to time establish, co-ordinate relationships between the Council and the World Council of Churches, other World Christian Communions, and other regional or national bodies related to the ecumenical movement;
5. represent and interpret the Council to its member churches, other religious organizations, government and the general public;
6. prepare dockets for meetings of the Assembly, the Governing Board and the Executive Committee;
7. seek to ensure adequate financial support for the Council and its programs; and
8. serve under the terms and conditions of a position description which shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

SECTION IX COMMISSIONS OF THE COUNCIL

A. COMMISSION ON FAITH AND WITNESS

1. PURPOSE

To provide a forum for Christian churches to:

- a. articulate the Christian faith they hold in common and to seek greater mutual understanding and witness;
- b. identify and explore theological questions of mutual concern and share resources for dialogue and common understanding;
- c. collaborate with other Commissions, Project Ploughshares, Reference Groups and other bodies of the Council in the exploration of mutual concerns and the expression of theological understanding; and
- d. reflect theologically on the direction of ecumenism.

2. TASKS

The Commission on Faith and Witness shall:

- a. initiate and engage in theological studies which will encourage greater mutual theological understanding among the churches;
- b. help to promote ecumenical dialogue in Canada;
- c. encourage and respond to local, regional and international studies and activities;
- d. prepare regional and national conferences from time to time on theological concerns;
- e. maintain liaison with such groups as the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.;
- f. establish Working Groups as required to consider and effect ecumenical collaboration in new areas of work;

- g. ensure the development of Canadian resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and support its celebrations in Canada;
- h. engage in theological reflection with other Commissions and agencies of the Council in relation to their areas of responsibility;
- i. report annually to the Governing Board of the Council and submit a Commission budget to the Finance Committee;
- j. advise and support the staff of the Council assigned to the Commission;
- k. respond as appropriate to requests of the Governing Board and the other bodies of the Council, and
- l. facilitate the exchange of ecumenical news and information.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Commission shall be composed of representatives of member churches of the Council and other churches in accord with Section III of the By-Laws.
- b. The membership of the Commission will consist of:
 - 1) up to three representatives from each Member church;
 - 2) one representative from each Associate Member church;
- c. A Vice-President and designated Council staff will attend Commission meetings.
- d. The Commission may invite Observers and Affiliates who shall have the right to voice but no vote and not hold office in accordance with approved policies governing the participation of non-member organizations.
- e. The Commission shall elect three to five of its members to its Steering Committee which shall also include *ex-officio* the Commission chairperson.
- f. Council staff may participate fully in meetings of the Steering Committee but not have the right to vote.

- g. The Steering Committee may act on behalf of the Commission where action is required between meetings, with due regard to its accountability.
- h. The Commission shall elect its own Chairperson, for a three-year term, renewable once.
- i. A past Chairperson may assume duties as directed by either the Chairperson or the Commission.
- j. In the final year of the Chairperson's term of office, the Commission shall elect its next Chairperson who shall serve as Vice-Chairperson for the remainder of the term and who will assume duties as directed by either the Chairperson or the Steering Committee.

4. MEETINGS

The Commission shall meet at least once a year, frequency and time to be decided by the Commission.

B. COMMISSION ON JUSTICE AND PEACE

1. PURPOSE

To provide a forum for Christian churches to:

- a. share information and concerns among those involved in ecumenical work on peace and social justice in Canada and the world;
- b. reflect biblically and theologically on peace and social justice,
- c. facilitate the cooperation of the churches in peace and justice concerns, and
- d. assist the Council and its member churches in their advocacy efforts where appropriate.

2. TASKS

The Commission on Justice and Peace shall:

- a. call together churches, coalitions and other interested organizations and individuals for the purpose of reflecting biblically and theologically on peace and justice, sharing information and collaborating on current activities, identifying emerging issues and making recommendations for action to the Council and its member churches;
- b. convene, as appropriate, fora and ad hoc working groups of interested parties with expertise or shared interests;
- c. assist the collaboration of the member churches with the World Council of Churches, other World Christian Communions, and other national and international bodies involved in promoting peace and social justice;
- d. engage as requested in the coordination of statements on peace and social justice in accordance with the by-laws on Council statements;
- e. receive regular reports from committees of the Council concerned with peace and social justice;
- f. report regularly to the Governing Board of the Council and submit annually a Commission budget to the Finance Committee;
- g. collaborate with Project Ploughshares, and other Commissions and bodies of the Council in areas of mutual concern;
- h. respond as appropriate to requests of the Governing Board and other Commissions and bodies of the Council;
- i. advise and support the staff of the Council assigned to the Commission;
- j. oversee the representation of the Council at the United Nations; and
- k. facilitate the exchange of ecumenical news and information.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Commission shall be composed of representatives of member churches of the Council and other churches in accord with Section III of the By-Laws.
- b. The membership of the Commission will consist of:
 - 1) up to three representatives from each Member church;
 - 2) one representative from each Associate Member church;
- c. A Vice-President, the Executive Director of Project Ploughshares or their designate, and designated Council staff will attend Commission meetings.
- d. The Commission may invite Observers and Affiliates who shall have the right to voice but no vote and not hold office in accordance with approved policies governing the participation of non-member organizations.
- e. The Commission shall elect three to five of its members to its Steering Committee which shall also include *ex-officio* the Commission chairperson and Council staff assigned to the Commission.
- f. The Steering Committee may act on behalf of the Commission where action is required between meetings, with due regard to its accountability.
- g. The Commission shall elect its own Chairperson, for a three-year term, renewable once.
- h. A past Chairperson may assume duties as directed by either the Chairperson or the Commission.
- i. In the final year of the Chairperson's term of office, the Commission shall elect its next Chairperson who shall serve as Vice-Chairperson for the remainder of the term and who will assume duties as directed by either the Chairperson or the Steering Committee.

4. MEETINGS

The Commission shall meet at least once a year, frequency and times to be determined by the Commission.

SECTION X REFERENCE GROUPS, COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

A. REFERENCE GROUPS AND OTHER BODIES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board may establish Reference Groups or other bodies to advance the priorities of the Governing Board. Reference Groups are established to complement and extend the work of the Commissions into areas that the Governing Board decides need additional study, information sharing, dialogue, shared action, or any other kind of special attention. They will be established by the Governing Board with specific Terms of Reference that are renewable or may be terminated by the Governing Board upon evaluation from time to time, usually each triennium. Terms of Reference will specify, among others, the mandate and purpose, tasks, leadership, membership, frequency of meetings, staffing and financing.

Evaluations will be carried out in close consultation with members and other non-member organizations who are stakeholders or funders of the Reference Group, with special attention to funds that may be designated for the Reference Group.

Reference Groups will report regularly to the Governing Board and submit annually a budget to the Finance Committee.

B. COMMITTEES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board may establish Committees to accomplish a specific task, to advance a priority or to convene a special gathering. Committees will be established by a decision of the Governing Board that specifies the mandate and membership of the Committee. The members of the Committee may be appointed by the Governing Board or by member churches. Usually a Committee is established with a limited mandate for a specific and limited period of time.

C. WORKING GROUPS

The Commissions, Reference Groups or Committees may establish Working Groups under their purpose⁷ and to advance their specific priorities. Working Groups includes Networks, Writing Teams, Task Forces, or any other body established under its purpose by a

⁷ See for example, Section VIII A.1., or Section VIII, B.1 of these By-laws.

Commission, Reference Group or Committee. Working Groups and other bodies will be established with specific Terms of Reference that are renewable or may be terminated from time to time, usually each triennium. Terms of Reference will specify, among others, the purpose and mandate, tasks, leadership, membership, frequency of meetings and financing. Working Groups will be closely connected to the body that established them, supported in their mandate, and may collaborate with other bodies of the Council; approval of public statements requires forum consensus of all members appointed by the member churches to that body following notification and the commissioning body has agreed; they will report regularly to the body that established them and to the Governing Board upon request.

D. AD HOC COMMITTEES

As the need arises, Commissions, Reference Groups, Committees or Working Groups may establish less formal Ad Hoc Committees to accomplish short-term specific tasks.

E. FORUM

Forum⁸ shall govern all aspects of Reference Groups, Committees, Working Groups, or any other body of the Council.

F. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Reference Groups, Committees and other bodies established by the Governing Board are accountable and responsible to the Governing Board in the same way as Commissions of the Council. Working Groups and other bodies established by the Commissions, Reference Groups or Committees are accountable and responsible to the Governing Board through the corresponding Commission, Reference Group or Committee.

⁸ Constitution Article IV; By-Laws Section II.

SECTION XI PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES

Project Ploughshares is an operating division of The Canadian Council of Churches that functions as a peace research institute.

A. PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Project Ploughshares Management Committee oversees the work of Project Ploughshares.

B. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Fiduciary responsibility for and the direction and control of Project Ploughshares lies with the Governing Board. Accordingly, the Project Ploughshares Management Committee is accountable and responsible to the Governing Board.

C. CHAIR OF THE PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Project Ploughshares Management Committee is appointed by the Governing Board at the nomination of the Committee.

D. GOVERNANCE PROTOCOL

The Governance Protocol⁹ describes the duties, responsibilities, and scope of authority of the Project Ploughshares Management Committee.

SECTION XII GUIDELINES FOR COUNCIL STATEMENTS

A. PURPOSE AND TYPES OF STATEMENTS

1. The Council may be called to make public statements from time to time. The initiative to make a public statement may emerge from the Council's own life, at the request of one or more of its member churches, in response to a request from the government of Canada, or from a national non-governmental organization. The need to make a

⁹ Project Ploughshares "Governance Protocol" as adopted by the Nov 2020 Governing Board.

statement may arise from events and situations which compel the Council and its members to declare a position.

2. The term "statement" shall include briefs to government, judicial and parliamentary committees, public letters to governments, press releases and statements to the media, calls to prayer and action and public letters addressed to the churches or church leaders.
3. The purpose of making public statements is to:
 - a. address the Council's own membership in order to raise consciousness in matters that might require united attention in thought or action;
 - b. raise issues for public debate and engage public opinion in Canada;
 - c. respond to government policies and actions within Canada or internationally in matters of concern to the Christian community of Canada; and
 - d. engage, in cooperation with international colleagues, the policy and actions of other national governments in matters of justice, peace, creation and the quality of human life.
4. The Protocol for Public Statements¹⁰ as it may be amended from time to time provides guidance on the types of statements, the vetting process, signatures, and other details that correspond with each type of statement.

B. RESPONSIBLE BODIES

Statements may be made by:

1. the Governing Board;
2. the Executive Committee between meetings of the Governing Board (in emergency circumstances);

¹⁰ "Protocol for Public Statements" as adopted by the May 2005 Governing Board.

3. the Assembly¹¹;
4. the President or General Secretary or deputy in situations which require immediate action, after consultation with the Executive Committee; and
5. a Commission, Project Ploughshares¹², Reference Group, Committee or Working Group within its area of competence and mandate.

C. INITIATION AND PROCESS

1. The proposal for an ecumenical public statement may be raised by a member church, by a member of the Assembly, Governing Board or the Executive Committee, a Commission, a Reference Group, Committee, Working Group, Project Ploughshares, or the Council staff.
2. After preliminary testing for viability and approval in principle by the officers, or the General Secretary in emergency situations, research and drafting should be done by a competent body, usually a Commission, Reference Group, Committee, Working Group, Project Ploughshares, the Council staff or an ad hoc group of church staff and volunteers called together for that purpose.
3. The Governing Board, the Executive Committee or the General Secretary in consultation with the President, shall give approval in principle to any body of the Council to make plans to prepare a statement in the name of the Council. The President and General Secretary shall also authorize the final text of any statement to be issued in the name of the Council following completion of forum vetting processes.
4. In urgent situations when a public statement by the Council is considered necessary, the General Secretary, on the recommendation of a Commission, Reference Group, Committee, working group or Project Ploughshares and after consultation with staff or other responsible church officials, may issue a statement in the name of the Council

¹¹ See the Constitution, Article IX.

¹² See the Governance Protocol for Project Ploughshares.

provided that it is consistent with the Council's previous forum statements, after consultation with the Executive Committee.

5. Commissions, Reference Groups, Committees or Working Groups may speak in their own names provided that in the judgment of the General Secretary in consultation with the President such statements are consistent with previous forum statements of the Council and its established policy.
6. In the case of statements signed by several churches, each church will have an adequate opportunity to review the statement using its own procedures, but with due consideration for the exigencies of the situation.
7. All public statements made by Commissions, Reference Groups, Committees, Working Groups or the General Secretary will be reported at the next meeting of the Governing Board.
8. The Council will not normally endorse the statement of another organization. If in some circumstances a public statement is better made jointly with other like-minded organizations, the Council may participate provided that:
 - a. there is consensus among the members;
 - b. the joint nature of the enterprise is clear; and
 - c. representatives of the Council participate in the production of the statement.
9. It is neither appropriate nor within the competence of the Council to respond to every request from the Government of Canada or other organizations for a public statement. While the Council must be open to new initiatives which are consistent with the policy and purpose of the organization, the Council will not normally consider a public statement on an issue that has not been studied by a body within or related to the Council. When the Executive and Governing Board are unable to act, the General Secretary, in consultation with staff colleagues, officers and other church officials will use their best efforts according to their knowledge and experience of the policy and procedures of the Council and their personal discretion in proposing or rejecting requests for public statements and report such decisions to the Executive Committee.

D. FORUM CONSENSUS

1. The Protocol for Public Statements¹³ as it may be amended by the Governing Board from time to time provides guidance on possible responses to an invitation to members to sign on to a public statement. Likewise, the Protocol for Public Statements describes when forum consensus occurs.

SECTION XIII AMENDMENTS

The procedures for the adoption, amendment or suspension of the By-Laws of the Council shall be those provided in Article XVI of the Constitution.

As amended by the CCC General Board, November 1991

As approved as Provisional By-laws by the CCC Governing Board, November 1992

As accepted by the CCC Governing Board, May 1993

As amended by the CCC Governing Board, November 1996

As amended by the CCC Governing Board, November 2000

As amended by the CCC Governing Board, May 2014

Amended text approved by the Governing Board in May 2021.

¹³ "Protocol for Public Statements" as adopted by the May 2005 Governing Board.